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JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

SINCE 1877

JANUARY 2, 2003

VOL. 126

No. 46

Evangelism Conference set for Tupelo

By William H. Perkins Jr.
Editor

The president of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) will twice address Mississippi Baptists during the 2002 Mississippi State Evangelism Conference on January 27-28 at Harrisburg Church, Tupelo.

Jack Graham, pastor of Prestonwood Church in Plano, Texas, and first-term president of the SBC, will take the pulpit during the January 28 morning session and then again in the January 28 afternoon session.

S.A. "Sonny" Adkins, director of evangelism for the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB) in Jackson, pointed out that Graham's visit is a milestone.

"It's been a long time since the sitting convention president has been able to speak at the State Evangelism Conference, and we're grateful that he is willing to commit to being with us during this special time in the life of our state convention.

"Mississippi Baptists can show their appreciation for Dr. Graham and the effort he has made to be with us by turning out to welcome him on January 28.

"I can virtually guarantee that everyone will be moved by his messages," Adkins pointed out.

In addition to Graham, the conference will feature messages and music from Mississippi Baptists including:

- preaching evangelist Danny Lanier of Little Rock (Miss.).
- preaching evangelist Don Taylor of Conehatta.
- music evangelist Ray Walker of Pontotoc.
- music evangelist Steve Walker of Pinola.
- music evangelists Steve and Becky Carver of Mathiston.
- music evangelists and Mississippi natives Reggie and Ladye Smith of Nashville.
- Rick Greene, minister of music at First Church, Madison.
- Slater Murphy, minister of music at Fairview Church, Columbus.
- Aaron Tomes, minister of music at host Harrisburg Church, Tupelo, and the Harrisburg Church Choir.

"We have done our best to match this list of outstanding Mississippi Baptist talent with an equally outstanding list of out-of-state speakers," Adkins said.

Those speakers include:

• Jay Strack of Orlando, Fla., founder and president of Student Leadership University and former SBC first vice-president.

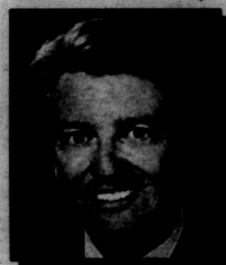
• Ronnie W. Floyd, senior pastor of First Church, Springdale, Ark., and former chairman of the SBC Executive Committee.

• Richard Jackson, founder of the Jackson Center for Evangelism in Brownwood, Texas, and pastor emeritus of North Phoenix Church, Phoenix, Az.

The January 27 and January 28 afternoon sessions both begin at 1:30 p.m. The January 27 evening session begins at 6:30 p.m.

The January 28 morning session begins at 9 a.m.

For more information, contact Adkins at MBCB, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 292-3279 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651 ext. 279. E-mail: pbozeman@mbcb.org.



Graham



Tomes



Strack



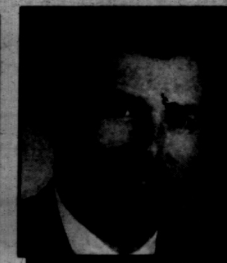
Floyd



Murphy



Green



Lanier



Reggie & Ladye Smith



Jackson



Walker



Walker



Taylor



Steve & Becky Carver

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NOBTS to offer course at Mississippi locations

January 20 begins the seventh of eight courses at eight locations in Mississippi sponsored by New Orleans Seminary (NOBTS) in New Orleans. The eight courses are:

- Song leading.
- Worship Planning.
- Reading Music: Rhythm/Pitch.
- Reading Music: Harmony/Melody.
- Hymnology.
- Music Administration/Staff Relations.
- Survey of Music Resources.
- Class Voice.

The eight courses meet two hours per week, and each course is eight weeks in length.

The cycle of courses is scheduled over a two-year period. Each student who completes the eight courses earns a Church Music Certificate from New Orleans Seminary plus a credit of eight hours toward a campus degree program.

There is a one-time registration fee of \$25. The cost of each course is \$85.

Scholarships are available for first-time students. Students already enrolled are not eligible. The grant is limited to one person per church.

The seventh course, Survey of Music Resources, will meet once each week for two hours per meeting for eight consecutive

weeks at the following locations and times:

- First Church, Columbus, beginning January 20 (7-9 p.m.). Bobby Sanderson, teacher.
- Broadmoor Church, Madison, beginning January 20 (7-9 p.m.). Jimmy McCaleb, teacher.
- First Church, Wiggins, beginning January 20 (6:30-8:30 p.m.). James Hayes, teacher.
- First Church, Booneville, beginning January 20 (7-9 p.m.). LuAnne Ford, teacher.
- Northcrest Church, Meridian, beginning January 20 (6:30-8:30 p.m.). Buddy McElroy, teacher.
- Hernando Church,

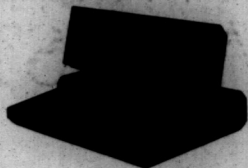
Hernando, beginning January 20 (7-9 p.m.). Barry Tweedy, teacher.

• Tri-County Associational Building, Columbia, beginning January 21 (6:30-8:30 p.m.). Kenny Adams, teacher.

• Meadville Church, Meadville, beginning January 21 (6:30-8:30 p.m.). Chuck McMinn, teacher.

For more information, contact Jimmy McCaleb, Church Music Department, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 292-3273 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 273. E-mail: jmccaleb@mbcb.org.

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Postmaster: Send changes of address
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530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Send
news, communication, and address
changes to **The Editor, BAPTIST
RECORD**, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS
39205-0530 (601) 968-3800
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VOLUME 127 NUMBER 1
(ISSN-0005-5778)

Published weekly except weeks of July 4
and Christmas by the Mississippi Baptist
Convention Board, 515 Mississippi Street,
Jackson, MS 39201. Subscription \$9.35 per
year payable in advance. Economy plans
available for cooperating Mississippi
churches. Periodicals postage paid at
Jackson, MS. Member, Association of State
Baptist Papers. Deadlines: News items —
one calendar week prior to requested pub-
lication date. Advertising — two calendar
weeks prior to requested publication date.

Our priceless gift to the world

As Southern Baptists around the world continue to send their gifts to the 2002 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions (LMCO), the International Mission Board (IMB) of the Southern Baptist Convention is recognizing top givers to the record 2001 offering — and Mississippi Baptists are near the top where we ought to be.

Total giving to the 2001 LMCO was \$113.7 million, an increase of \$532,804 over the 2000 offering total. Although the lofty 2001 goal of \$120 million was missed by a mere 5.25%, the offering amount was a new record and pushed the cumulative total for the 114-year-old offering to \$2.2 billion.

That's a lot of money for missions. Missions isn't all about money, but Southern Baptists' push to fulfill the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20) does require funding. That's a fact, and Mississippi Baptists are among the best at supporting that missions effort.

First Church, Jackson, a perennial leader in LMCO giving, finished second among the more than 40,000 SBC churches in total dollar giving for 2001. First Church, which has led the SBC in LMCO giving in years past, was exceeded only by Calvary Church in Winston-Salem, N.C. That congregation's gift of \$394,698 topped First Church's of \$283,730.

Other top churches in 2001 LMCO total-dollar giving were:

- First Church, Dallas: \$254,642.
- First Church, Rockwell, Texas: \$253,255.
- First Church, McAllister, Okla.: \$252,116.
- First Church, Roanoke, Va.: \$229,405.
- Liberty Church, Hampton, Va.: \$229,398.
- First Church, Odessa, Texas: \$225,592.
- First Church, Russellville, Ark.: \$216,422.
- Black Shear Place Church, Flowery Branch, Ga.: \$191,324.

Statistics provided by IMB indicate that the top 10 churches in 2001 gave 2.2% of the offering, while the top 100 churches gave 10.4% of the offering.

"While the top 100 congregations have given a very substantial portion of the total offering, it's still important to note that almost 90% of the offering comes from congregations faithfully giving smaller gifts.

"This offering couldn't succeed without the commitment thousands of churches have to their missionaries," said Billy Hoffman, IMB director of development.

The Mississippi Baptist Convention also ranked high in the 2001 LMCO totals, with a second place finish in per capita giving of \$10.69 among state conventions and fellowships. The South Carolina Baptist Convention eked out a first place finish over Mississippi Baptists by a mere 64 cents.

South Carolina and Mississippi were the only two state organizations in the SBC that gave over \$10 per capita to the 2001 LMCO. Overall, Southern Baptists gave \$7.05 per capita. Other top state conventions and fellowships in 2001 LMCO per capita giving were:

- North Carolina: \$9.55.
- Virginia: \$9.20.
- Tennessee: \$8.29.
- Alabama: \$8.27.
- Arkansas: \$8.17.
- Georgia: \$8.16.
- Maryland-Delaware: \$7.80.
- Colorado: \$7.49.



A good businessman might ask to see the "bottom line" of these massive annual expenditures.

According to IMB, the offering currently provides about 49% of the funding for the 5,487 IMB missionaries working among 1,497 people groups worldwide. In 2001, Southern Baptist missionaries and their co-workers baptized more than 395,773 new believers and organized 5,775 new churches.

That would be a pretty good return on any bottom line, but the return on LMCO giving is not measured in money. It is measured in the souls of people who have received eternal salvation through the sacrifice of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and who are now spreading the Good News to their kin and compatriots and building new churches at breakneck speed.

As the credit card commercial on television might say, that's priceless.

GUEST OPINION:

Hope in the storm

By Tony Martin, Associate Editor

Truth shows up in the most interesting places. Over the holidays, I had the opportunity to see *The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers*, the second installment in the grand fantasy movie trilogy based on J.R.R. Tolkien's epic saga, *The Lord of the Rings*. Much has been made of Tolkien's devout Christianity, and many evangelical commentators noted last year, with the release of *The Fellowship of the Ring*, how Tolkien's worldview and Christian faith were foundational to the movie.

This is not intended to be a movie review — although I can frankly admit that I was transported, enthralled, and just generally swept away — but rather the sweet epiphany I had while watching.

The book and movie are both presented as an unambiguous clash between good and a particularly dark and pervasive evil. It holds a special resonance for us in this post 9/11 world in which freedom is set against tyranny. (If you see the first two movies or read the book, you'll find uneasy similarities between Bin Laden, Saddam, the Taliban strewn everywhere — all the more

remarkable in light of the fact that principal filming was completed in 1999.)

"There's good in the world, and it's worth fighting for," one key character says at one point. I was struck by the movie's embracing of vigorous leadership, but also a heartfelt view that "the least of these" must do what the great cannot. Overall, the movie, even its darkest moments, has a shining thread of hope woven throughout its fabric.

America finds herself facing, much as the characters in the *Two Towers*, a dark and insidious evil that seems bent on destruction. These can be dire days, true, but America has faced crises before. With an eye toward

history, we must be mindful of that freezing winter at Valley Forge; the fratricidal brother-against-brother conflict of the American Civil War; Pearl Harbor and Normandy; and the desperate days of the Cuban Missile Crisis, when we literally teetered on the brink of nuclear annihilation. We've been where we are now many times before.

In the movies, as in real life, great events pivot on the actions and decisions of individuals, big and small. One person makes a difference. In light of our world and the darkness that surrounds us once again, what can one person — you or me — do?

Simple. We can HOPE. Not a vague, uneasy hope, as in "I hope things turn out," but rather,

"My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness." Hope not in politicians and statesmen, hope not in military might, but hope in a risen Savior and a sovereign God. Consider this: When we face dark trials and heartaches, and in those times when the night seems unusually long, God is right there. He will always provide grace for us individually and corporately in two ways. He will either remove the evil and pain from our midst and banish it from our presence; or He will provide the supernatural grace for us to bear up against whatever is cast against us.

Both of these eventualities carry with them the supreme knowledge that God is in control, that He is orchestrating events around us, that He ultimately guides history to its ending. Both of these eventualities are positive and evidence of His love. Our hope, then, is not based on feelings, or apparent circumstances. Whatever happens in 2003, we have hope because God has sovereignty over all of life's joys and trials.

Rest easy, friends. Our confidence is not misplaced. We — HE — will prevail.

NOBTS holds classes in Mississippi

New Orleans Seminary (NOBTS) will hold classes at two Mississippi churches beginning in January: Broadmoor Church at 1531 Highland Colony Parkway in Madison for undergraduate students, and First Church at 100 East College Street in Clinton for graduate students.

Classes will begin on January 20 for certificate-level students and on January 27 for associate- and graduate-level students. New students at Broadmoor Church will meet for testing and orientation on January 20 at 2 p.m. All students who have not participated in Testing and Orientation at the Clinton Center are required to attend on January 20 at 10 a.m. in the Family Life Center of First Church, Clinton.

Returning students for both centers must have all paperwork, with payment, in the office at New Orleans Seminary before January 27. New students can register the first day of class.

Students who have been out of classes for one year or less may apply for re-enrollment by attending the first class and completing the registration form. There is an additional \$10 fee for re-enrollment.

Detailed information on the Mississippi course offerings will be published in the January 9 issue of The Baptist Record. For additional information about New Orleans Seminary's extension centers, contact Jimmy Dukes at (800) 514-1175 or visit online at www.nobts.edu/extensions.

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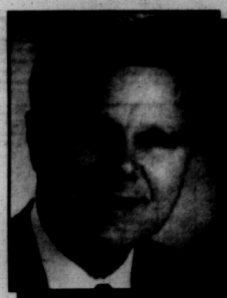
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A NEW YEAR

Just days before Christmas, I was at a funeral with one of our pastors and his family. George Meadows, longtime pastor in our state and presently pastor of FBC, Itta Bena, and his wife, Betty Sue, lost their oldest son, John. John was only 37 years of age and is survived by his wife, Lucy, and his precious little 15-month-old daughter. It was just over a year ago, during the Thanksgiving season, that John was in a wreck from which he never recovered.

For most of 2002, John was in the Baptist Hospital in Jackson, Miss., surrounded by his loving and supportive family. At the memorial service, John's dad, Rev. George Meadows, began the service by quoting words from the Psalmist, "Bless the Lord, oh my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, oh my soul, and forget not all his benefits." Having known some of the trials, hopes, disappointments, frustrations, dreams, determination, and desires over the past year, it was almost shocking to hear, "Bless the Lord, oh my soul."

Having known this family and watched them care, love, pray, and support over the entire year, it was a fitting word and it began to speak to



Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

me about the way I viewed this past year. I'm confident that, along with me, not one reader would be able to say that they had no problems or difficulties, no trials or heartaches, over the past 365 days. Many of those things that come our way are a natural part of life itself, but what I faced and felt over the past year, and the things I so often dealt with, were nothing to be compared with what this family had gone through for over a year. Still, they maintained the most remarkable faith, beautiful spirit, and genuine care for others.

I saw in this marvelous family some things that I believe God wants me to carry into the New Year.

• I was reminded of a **grace that is reliable**. I know that most of us agree and believe that God's grace is sufficient, at least theoretically and theologically we do, but on the practical side of life with its pains, potholes, and personal

disappointments, we often lose sight of God's reliable grace. It is a powerful thing and a life changing force, to walk into the days of a new year knowing that you can rely on God's grace.

• I was also reminded that there was a **race to run**. The writer of Hebrews beautifully instructs us to "run the race that is set before us." Too often, when adversities come our way, we forget everything except the adversity. We lose sight of the race we are to run and the purpose for which we are here. We allow our troubles and inconveniences to turn us aside and forget the race we are to run.

I have met people through the years who did not just have troubles in life; troubles were their life. I am reminded of Job who, in the midst of life, loss, heartbreak, confusion, and sickness, kept being a blessing to others. He kept looking up and looking out for God's purposes to be

worked in his life and he pressed forward.

May God help us this year, a new year, to run the race.

• A final thought, we have a **case to repeat**. We, who know the Lord, need to present a case for God's goodness to everyone we know and come in contact with throughout this new year. God is good, even when things are bad!

It was Christmas time and a new year just ahead when I saw a family who lived out the true meaning of Christmas. They were a living picture of how God cared when it looked like He might not, of how a miracle can exist in the worst of places and the darkest of days, and of how He can transform the days ahead in ways that we may not understand. To you and me, God gives a new year!

Bibliocipher

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PEGL SEG PYXHP WHA
LCHAGDP SEWS SEG
EYXE XCA EWSE
LDCOXES SCLWDA UG.
AWHYGR KCOD: SLC

Clue: S=T

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Hosea Nine: Five

MS POSITIONS AVAILABLE

JOB OPENING - NEWLY RESTRICTED THE UNION BAPTIST CHURCH, 1628 position. Preschool Ministry Director; West Union Road, Picayune, Miss. 39466 full-time position, Harrisburg Baptist Church. Salary \$25-30 k; call for job description at (662) 842-6917.

CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH, Hattiesburg, Miss. is currently seeking a bi-vocational minister of music. Please send resumes: c/o Music Search, Calvary Baptist Church, 3139 Oak Grove Road, Hattiesburg, MS 39402.

PELAHATCHIE BAPTIST CHURCH, Pelahatchie, Miss. seeks pianist to play for two Sunday morning services, Sunday evening worship service and adult choir practice after the Sunday evening service. Contact Chris Nash, Minister of Music, at (601) 825-4518 after 5:00 p.m. or leave message on machine.

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Feb. 28 - March 3



JUST FOR THE RECORD

Hillcrest Church, Byram, invites all former staff and members to a building dedication service, 5950 Terry Road, on Jan. 5 at 10:25 a.m. The 1963 time capsule will be opened during the service and a new capsule will be started at this time. A covered dish lunch will follow the service.

Jerry W. Mixon, Stewardship Director and Cooperative Program Promotion for the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, has been called as interim pastor of First Church, Columbus. He will begin his duties Sunday, January 5.

Bethesda Church, Terry, ordained Nick Bullard as a deacon. Pictured (from left) are Barry Boguet, pastor, Bullard, his wife Janet, and John McCall.

First Church, Inverness, recognized L.K. Brown recently for 42 years of service as a deacon. He was presented a Bible.

Pictured (from left) are Brown and Danny Lee Prater, pastor.

Tylertown Church, Tylertown, recently held a cen-

tennial celebration. Jim Futral recognized the church on behalf of the historical commission. Futral brought the morning message and James L. Sullivan spoke of church memories. Michael Glenn is pastor.



Michael Glenn, pastor and Dr. Jim Futral

Goss Church, Columbia, held Pastor Appreciation Day on Oct. 13 honoring Mark McArthur.



Barry Boguet, pastor, Nick & Janet Bullard, and John McCall



L.K. Brown and Danny Lee Prater, pastor

The church recently paid their building debt and held a note burning on Dec. 29. Pictured (from left) are McArthur and Glen Bourne.



Mark McArthur, pastor and Glen Bourne

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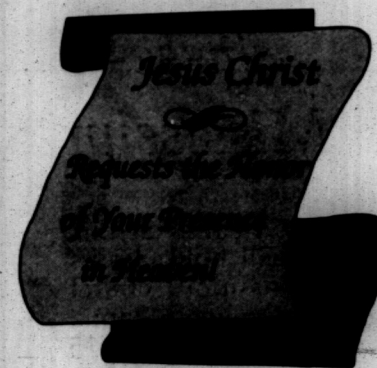
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3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. *(I believe in Jesus.)*
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with him. *(I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)*

But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name (John 1:12).

If you make a decision for Jesus Christ today, contact a local Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

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THE VILLAGE VIEW



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Gifts of Honor and Memory

A portion of The Village View is allocated each month to a list of Gifts of Honor and Memory. Many groups and individuals elect to pay tribute to others through this sensitive, meaningful, and helpful medium. This feature is hopefully designed to further honor, with taste and respect, those who are and have been special to our special friends.

November 16 - 30, 2002

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FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

The Promise of Peace

Matthew 6:25-34; 11:28-30

By Shirley Stough

Years ago I said something that revealed worry. Later, when the situation never developed, my young daughter said, "Oh my, you just wasted a worry!" Her comment got my attention. I realized that worry was a useless endeavor. Most of the outcomes people worry about never happen, and worry negatively affects a person's well being - physically, mentally, socially, and spiritually. Obviously we should dismiss worry in favor of concern. There is a difference between concern and worry. Concern is consideration of a situation to determine a logical, possible solution. Meaningful activity can result. Worry is nothing more than fretting about something that may or may not happen. If our lives contain worry, we can seek guidance from

God's word. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus addressed the issue of worry while instructing His disciples. What He taught was a valuable lesson for them and for us as well.

Jesus pointed out that worry is unproductive. His teaching involved having the proper attitude toward material items. He instructed His disciples not to worry about the physical necessities of life - food and clothing. Being too anxious about these necessities and spending too much time collecting and storing them divert attention from God. Jesus reminded them that they could not serve God and material things. Just as God provides birds access to food, He provides opportunities for us, His highest creation, to earn our livelihoods; however, we are not to become totally dedicated to securing

Stough

worry could harm health, thereby possibly shortening lives.

Jesus further taught that worry is unbelief. In His example, He did not use birds as examples of idleness, but rather examples of God's provision for His living creations. Birds actually work continuously for their food, but they do not worry. When we become anxious about necessities of life, we show a lack of confidence in God's ability to provide necessities for us. Thus, we do not have faith - total trust in God. Jesus reminded His disciples that they could depend on Him to keep His promise to care for them. However, Jesus did not mean that anyone should be idle while waiting for God's

material possessions. Worrying about material possessions blinds us to the real values of life. Why would we desire well-clothed, well-fed bodies while our souls are starved and threadbare? Jesus concluded that worry and anxiety could add nothing to life - not to quality or to length. In fact,

provision. People should make plans to deal with normal, natural concerns of life, but not become obsessed with worry because worry is a contradiction of faith in God. In another example, Jesus used the beauty of flowers to remind His disciples that natural beauty comes from within. Our beauty as Christians does not come from what we wear but from our inner nature. Thus, anxiety about luxuries such as fine clothes is a futile endeavor because these luxuries are temporal. Why should we become so anxious about temporary, outward appearances?

Many people worry about yesterday and tomorrow. Such worry is unnecessary because we can live only one day at a time; it is impossible to live today in the future or in the past. We will have the same amount of time tomorrow to deal with that day's circumstances. God helps us live through each day, one day at a time. In fact, when we move into the future, we find that God is already there working on our behalf. In Matthew 6:33-34 Jesus summarizes His

point that anxiety prevents Christians from devoting themselves to God's kingdom and concerns. If we seek His kingdom as a priority, He will continually provide for our needs. Commitment leaves no room for anxiety over mere possessions.

Where do we go to find relief from the anxiety of life's problems? Jesus has issued us an invitation to come to Him for peace/rest. He has commanded us to take His yoke upon us. A yoke is a contraption linking two oxen together to combine their power in pulling a load. Taking Jesus' yoke means that we will be yoked with Him and will have His power/strength to help us pull our burdens. This promise will ease our burden and free us from anxiety.

Why should we worry when we have Jesus for a partner, a Father? He will give us guidance, strength, solace when and where we need it. If we give our relationship with Him proper priority, we can live in a state of peace, free from anxiety.

Stough is a member of First Church, Picayune.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

"Genuine Spirituality"

John 14:15-17, 25-26; 15:26-27; 16:1-5-15

By Don Wilson

Without Jesus the disciples could do nothing. Jesus had told them that (John 15:5) and they were in the process of learning by experience. The problem for them arose when Jesus began telling them that He would not be around very much longer. Jesus had another gift for these disciples, and it was this gift that would make all the difference. He was about to give them the gift of His Holy Spirit who would be His own presence with them. With Jesus, who then was walking beside them, they could do anything. Later, Jesus would walk inside them in the person of the Holy Spirit and still they could do the impossible.

I. HE IS COMFORTER (John 14:15-17)

God the Father's great concern was to live perpetually within believers. He chose to

accomplish that task by giving a special gift. The gift is a person called "Helper." The title "Helper" is used here in 14:16, but also in 14:26, 15:26, and 16:7. The root of the word actually means "called alongside of." The word is used of a lawyer pleading a case, of a tutor who taught his students, of a doctor called to the bedside of a dying patient, of a friend who pleaded the cause of another, and of one who came to encourage someone. Actually, the promised Holy Spirit would not be called alongside but inside. The other places where "Helper" is used show what He would do to help and comfort. However, 14:16 notes that his comforting mission would be accomplished simply by His presence.

Wilson

The Holy Spirit is called the "Spirit of truth" in 14:17, but no explanation is given. Jesus noted that the world could never receive Him because they could not see Him and did not know Him, but the Holy Spirit of truth was already present with these disciples.

II. HE IS TEACHER (John 14:25-26)

One of the means by which the promised Comforter would help would be in His teaching. Jesus spoke while present; the Spirit would speak in His absence. He would teach all things. Everything these guys needed to be taught would be learned through the Holy Spirit within them. However, what the Spirit taught was not new truth. All of us who teach do more reminding that introducing new, previously undiscovered truth. The heart of His teaching would be in reminding these followers of the words their Master had spoken.

III. HE IS WITNESS (John 15:26-27)

The most important task that

the Holy Spirit would have would be to testify of Jesus. He would never seek to glorify Himself, but would instead always point to Jesus. The Holy Spirit understands that His role is to bear testimony of Jesus and He willingly submits. He testifies about His identity and actually draws people to Christ.

IV. HE IS CONVICTOR (John 16:5-11)

Jesus again discussed the fact that He was leaving them. The sending of the Comforter depended on the departure of the One who would send Him. The advantage of the Spirit's promised presence is centered in His convicting work. He would convict in three areas. First, he would convict of sin (16:8-9). Though the "Holy Spirit can convict man of any sin, the sin of unbelief is the focus. It is necessary to convict of sin because "they do not believe in Me." He causes men to see their unbelief. The Spirit also convicts of righteousness (16:8, 10). While He walked the earth, Jesus modeled righteousness. The Holy Spirit of truth is that person who shows Jesus as the Righteous standard so that

men see themselves in light of Jesus. Finally, the Helper will convict of judgment (16:8, 11) because Satan was already judged (See 12:30-31). The world will realize the reality of judgment only by the convicting work of the Holy Spirit.

IV. HE IS GUIDE (John 16:12-15)

Jesus had poured His Life into these disciples for over three years. He had constantly taught, but in the final hours with them he recognized that they were unable to bear everything that needed to be taught to them. For that reason, the ministry of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth, was essential. His mission is to guide the followers of Jesus into all truth. He speaks only what He hears; he has no message of His own to proclaim. He will disclose some events that will occur in the future, but the primary act of the Holy Spirit is to glorify Jesus. He does it every day in every teaching, in every act of conviction, and in every step He guides.

Wilson is pastor of Pleasant Ridge Church, Dumas.

Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record should be typed on one side of the page, double-spaced, and include a return address.

THE BAPTIST

Record

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PRACTICAL PRINCIPLES



A JOURNAL OF THE CHRISTIAN ACTION COMMISSION OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Issue 1

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No single issue facing the American family today has produced more heartache or tragedy than abortion.

In the thirty years since the Supreme Court handed down *Roe v. Wade*, over 42 million American babies have been legally aborted.

Incredibly, women who identify themselves as Protestants (43%) and Catholics (27%) obtain the majority of abortions, according to Richard Land, President of the Southern Baptist Convention's Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission in Nashville.

In a chapter from his book, *For Faith & Family: Changing America by Strengthening the Family*, Dr. Land writes about the endangered species which is our unborn children. — J. Porter



Land

ENDANGERED SPECIES

By RICHARD LAND

We have strict federal laws in the Endangered Species Act that protect the snail darter fish and the spotted owl. In California, it's a crime to disturb a seagull's nest because the unhatched eggs represent the potential for life. Yet abortion remains legal and commonplace in this country thirty years after *Roe v. Wade*.

I still have a jarring and vivid memory of the first time I realized the full humanity of a human fetus. I was a sophomore in high school, and it was the day our biology class projects were due.

One of my classmates, a girl whose father was an obstetrician, had prepared a project on the development of the human fetus. She had on display what I now know was a twelve-week-old human fetus. From my lab table only a few feet from the storage shelf, I could see that it was a perfectly formed little boy curled up in a glass jar

filled with formaldehyde. The little baby was so undeniably human that I was deeply disturbed to see him displayed in such a casual, callous, disrespectful way.

When I finally mentioned it to my teacher, she sent me down to talk it over with the principal. When I explained my concern, his immediate response was, "Well, Richard, you're not a Catholic are you?" (The Roman Catholic church has maintained a witness for the unborn when many others were uncertain or simply wrong.)



"No, sir," I answered, surprised by his response. "I'm a Baptist, but that's terribly wrong. That's not just a science experiment. That's a human being, and it should be shown proper respect."

A couple of hours later the fetus was removed from the shelf and placed out of sight in a storeroom until that girl made her presentation.

From that day forward I've never seen how anyone, Christian or not, could deny a fetus was as surely a human being as you and I, based on physical evidence alone. I don't see how anyone can view a photo or a film of human fetal development and dismiss those tiny children as anything less than fully human.

The Bible teaching on the sanctity of human life is unmistakable. Even so, the most endangered species in our culture is the unborn human being. At present, some turtle eggs have more legal rights than a healthy, full-term child the moment before he or she is born.

Sad as it seems, this news doesn't even make a ripple in the public debate anymore. We've been brutalized, desensitized, and paganized by an ever-rising flood of the unborn's blood as our nation continues to abort a baby every twenty seconds. That's 3 babies a minute, 180 babies an hour, over 4,000 babies a day.

My own awareness at an early age of God's perspective on human life underscores the importance of children being taught scriptural truths. When we hide God's Word in our hearts as children, we can more easily discern right and wrong as adults.

God judges us, I believe, in large part as a society, on how

we deal with the most helpless and defenseless among us. Our nation has misplaced its moral compass. We've come unhitched from our God-fearing foundation. As a result, there are going to be those around us —

As followers of Christ, we have abdicated our prophetic calling to protect human life in favor of "just getting along." Many have interpreted our silence to be support for the culture of death in which we now find ourselves. God's perspective is clear: As man is created in His image,

human life is sacred, distinct in nature and design from all other life.

It is incumbent upon Christians to frame the debate in the public square using God's rule: Human life is precious. Abortion is wrong because the Bible says, repeatedly and categorically, that it's wrong. We have a right, in fact an obligation, to carry our faith-based views into the marketplace of ideas. Jesus commands us to actively engage the "world," preserving as "salt" and illuminating as "light." Christians are to be good citizens of the state and trustworthy witnesses to the King of kings and the unbending truths of Scripture.

Christians, in particular, have an obligation to confront these moral and ethical issues with a scriptural response. These are hard questions, but God's Word gives the simple but indisputable answer: Human life from conception onward should be protected, not endangered.

Join with The Mississippi Baptist Christian Action Commission (CAC) and other Southern Baptists across the nation in observing Sanctity of Human Life Sunday on January 19. For more information contact CAC at (601) 292-3329 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, x329. Visit our web site at www.christianaction.com.

